What is one thing that I find fascinating? Coffee. More like coffee shops, stands and cafés. I would like to think of myself as somewhat of a coffee connoisseur. Not to say I am that girl with her French tip nails, coach purse and Starbucks coffee in hand. But I am quite picky where I order my drink. I have a close friend from around Spokane, and she is worse. She loves Starbucks, and living on campus makes getting lattes, mochas and the whole nine yards quite difficult. But leave it up to Kori and she will wake up 15 minutes early to get her white chocolate with raspberry mocha.

I have not been observing this coffee crazed Spokane phenomenon for just one hour, but since I had my first sip. Every morning before school started and on lunch breaks, constantly I was being asked to get coffee with someone. Lucky for Spokane locals there are Starbucks’ everywhere and if that doesn’t hit the spot there are drive-thru coffee stands galore.

My dear friend Kori. Words cannot describe the girl’s pickiness. She will only sip her Starbucks coffees. And I can clearly see the emotion that runs across her face when hit with a bad cup of coffee. I take it like a champ, but she will be in a grumpy mood all day.

Here’s where I find coffee to hit a cultural line. Being from the originating state from which Starbucks was born I think I live in a coffee culture. Not just Americanos and drip, but fancy drinks I won’t even dare to try these days. It seems to be however, a northwest obsession. I have been to Canada, and of course they do sell all the works, but Tim Horton’s, which originated from there and is full blown, is nothing but drip coffee and cappuccinos. Plain and simple, the Canadian coffee addiction is the original. However, if you move toward the south and Midwest, coffee is not on the teenage and college girls’ number one choice for a breakfast or study item. Some members of my family who live in the Midwest have never heard of a latte.

How I have really come to take an interest in coffee is being in Ohio. Not only being addicted with coffee, I sort of have the urge to find the perfect lattes and mochas for my own taste buds. It’s hard to do in Ohio. They do not even speak the same caffeinated language I do. They use these one button push machines instead of grinding the beans themselves. The number of coffee shops that came on my GPS was one, 15 minutes away and the rest 30 minutes from that, not one being a chain Starbucks. What makes a good fancy coffee to me, is not just the bean, it’s how long the bean has been sitting in the store, how they grind the bean, how much bean is used, how long is it brewed. To take it even further, the milk used, the ice used and the flavor. A sauce is different than syrup as well as a powder is. They all have uniquely different tastes, even though it may just be vanilla.

My obsession with coffee is more like an addiction. What started as a random treat turned into physical need. I notice a lot of my close friends feel the same way; however I have turned my addiction into a game. But on the other side of the country I don’t see that. Young college students are not as into the coffee craze as I am. I asked the only local coffee shop in my aunt’s town how business was. She responded saying that when school is in session the business does really well with the teachers, and when school is not it is empty.

I believe a lot of the reason behind this is sweet tea. My whole family loves to drink it. It’s a very classic summer drink and quite popular. I know it is a push and stretch but a lot of people I know who are not on this coffee train are affiliated with religious groups whether it be banned from their church or not. In some areas coffee is associated with bad happenings and altering the body.

Coffee has become my life. Here I am on vacation and I am searching for that perfect cup and I have yet to find it. Coffee is a culture in itself. People in Washington State take coffee for granted because there is a coffee stand on every corner and that has become part of the lifestyle. I have travelled throughout the country and have yet to find the “coffee craze” that exists in the Northwest. No one in Ohio or Minnesota hang out at coffee shops or cafes. Coffee cafes and shops are definitely part of a certain culture that only exists in particular areas. People come into coffee shops to do homework and/or socialize with others however, in the Midwest, people do not go to cafes, but rather they tend to socialize more in bars or restaurants and fly by the coffee stand windows.

I want people to be able to understand that there is more to coffee than meets the eye, and it varies throughout different cultures and areas. Whether it is band or to where coffee is worshiped it is quite a popular name. Still the largest thing I noticed is the line between the Northwest and other states. Not to say places such as Florida are not into the coffee scene. Disney World on it’s own has several coffee shops every magical turn you take.

I believe that coffee has created its own world. Or more like the leaders of the industries themselves. Between the actual coffee, the foods, the franchises, stocks and merchandise the big businesses are booming. However the more I sip the trendy coffees the more I want to go back to my local coffee stand in Spokane, Washington.